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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda items 39, 40 and 84
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 3 June 1999 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Last week, the Israeli Government took a decision to enlarge an illegal settlement called "Ma'ale Adumim" by approximately 12,000 dunums (3,250 acres). This expansion involves the effective annexation of land, the construction of additional housing units and the illegal transfer of more Israelis to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem. The settlement is located approximately 6 kilometres East of Jerusalem, and if implemented the plan would link the settlement with the illegally enlarged municipal boundaries of Jerusalem. Furthermore, the expansion would separate the northern half of the West Bank from its southern half, making it all the more difficult to apply international law and legitimacy with respect to Jerusalem.

This decision by Israel, the occupying power, represents another grave breach of the Hague Regulations of 1907, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 and Additional Protocol I of 1977. The decision also represents a gross violation of relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and represents another attempt to derail prospects to resuscitate the peace process. In this regard, I would also like to refer to my previous letters dated 11 May 1999 and 20 May 1999 on illegal Israeli actions related to the Orient House and to Jabal Abu Ghneim and Ras Al-Amud. It is difficult to believe that all of these actions are being taken without the tacit approval of the newly elected Prime Minister of Israel since there were no comments on his part regarding these actions.

The position of the international community in this regard is very clear, as most recently demonstrated at the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly and the convening of the upcoming 15 July 1999 conference of the high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention on measures to enforce the convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem. It is inconceivable that the Security Council remain idle and not take the necessary actions to ensure the cessation and reversal of all of the above-mentioned illegal Israeli actions. We call upon the Security Council to do just that.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as an official document of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 39, 40 and 84, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Nasser AL-KIDWA
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations